

**2015 Preservation Award for Outstanding Preservation Education and  
Outreach**

**Montana Project Archaeology**

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The Montana Project Archaeology (MPA) program was launched in 2003 within the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Montana State University. The Montana Project Archaeology program hosts a variety of professional development courses, institutes and workshops for teachers in Montana – and also sometimes educators from Wyoming, South Dakota, and Idaho – to teach archaeology in K-12 classrooms and promote a preservation ethic. The program also works with Montana teachers to provide hands-on archaeological experiences for elementary students throughout the state.

Montana Project Archaeology is part of the national Project Archaeology program sponsored by the Bureau of Land Management in large part as a response to widespread looting and vandalism of archaeological sites. This national heritage education program uses archaeological inquiry to foster understanding of past and present cultures; improve social studies, science, and literacy education; and enhance citizenship education to help preserve our archaeological legacy. The national program, which also happens to be based at MSU in Bozeman, is currently

celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since its inception, more than 7,000 educators have participated nationwide in Project Archaeology workshops. These educators use Project Archaeology materials to instruct an estimated 180,000 students of all ages annually.

In Montana, the Montana Project Archaeology program has developed archaeological curricula for teachers specifically about our state such as their most recent publication about the Anzick archaeological site, entitled *Investigating the First Peoples: The Clovis Child Burial*. Another recent project centers on the archaeology of historic mining in Montana and is called *Investigating Garnet, a Historic Mining Town*. All of the curriculum they develop and the workshops and courses they host have a place-based focus, bringing educators and students out to the places where history has happened and archaeology is preserved - including Virginia City and also Fort Parker near Livingston, the home of the first Crow Agency.

Most recently, in 2006, Montana Project Archaeology, Montana State University, and the Bureau of Land Management partnered again to develop the Montana Site Stewardship Program. This program promotes public awareness and protection of both pre-contact and historic era sites in Montana. Trained program volunteers,

overseen by public land managers, monitor archaeological and historical sites throughout Montana. The unpaid volunteers are committed to cultural resource protection and preservation activities that will reduce damage to archaeological sites due to human, animal, and environmental impacts. To date there are 100 trained site stewards, 70% of whom are actively protecting sites throughout Montana.

The professionalism and expertise exhibited by the Montana Project Archaeology team is matched only by their energy and enthusiasm. For their tireless efforts to engage with teachers, students and volunteers and to promote heritage stewardship and cultural understanding, we are honored today to convey the 2015 Historic Preservation Award for Outstanding Preservation Education and Outreach to Montana Project Archaeology. Here to receive the award is Crystal Alegria, Montana Project Archaeology Coordinator, and Courtney Agenten, Special Projects Coordinator.